

Nabulsi Encyclopedia of Islamic Sciences

November

18

2007

Televised Symposiums – Al Shariqah TV channel – Miscellaneous topics – lesson (4) – The Quranic scientific inimitability between supporters and opposers

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All- Knower, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Preface:

The argument about inimitability flamed up lately between supporters and opposers, for some scholars supported radically and extremely the inimitability in the noble Quran, whereas others opposed it aggressively, and there was a third party of scholars who preferred to be in a neutral zone between the two parties by supporting what is positive and opposing what is negative as much as they could.

Thus, according to the serious nature of this topic, we thought of tackling it, and by Allah's decree, our guest for this lecture is one of the most notable scholars in proselytizing and in Islamic intellect, not to mention that he gave to this religion in abundance and we second his goodness, and since we are not trying to recommend him on the behalf of Allah, but most of people were touched by his sincerity and devotion since he was young. He was born in a religious family in which knowledge and devotion were available, and this is something prevalent among Syrian scholars.

Let us welcome Dr. Mohammad Rateb Al Nabulsi, who was appointed as a lecturer in the field of Scientific Miracles of the Noble Quran and Prophetic Sunna in the faculties of Islamic Law and Fundamentals of Islamic Religion in Damascus.

Welcome esteemed sir.

Like wise and may Allah reward you in abundance.

Mr. Ayman:

We are happy to have you, and I want to express my admiration for your stylishness, don't you worry that people will accuse you of westernizing?

Dr. Rateb:

((Repair your saddles and make sure that you are dressed well, so that you will stand out among people like an adornment))

[Ahmad]

This is a prophetic guidance.

Mr. Ayman:

This is how Islam is, and it is all about perfection, elegance, and good quality in everything.

Of course Al Shariqah is honored to have you in it, and you are always available in UAE and all other Arab countries, but today's meeting is in Al Shariqah's university, and you were in a meeting with its tutors, so what did you discuss with them?

Dr. Rateb:

I was in two meetings, one with the heads of departments, and a second with his Excellency the headmaster of the university, and we tackled crucial and important topics in both meetings.

Call to Allah is either sincere or self ego oriented

One of the topics, subjects of tackling, is that we shouldn't worry about this religion (i.e. Islam), for it is the religion of Allah, and instead, we should worry about being allowed or not by Allah to be among His soldiers.

Falsehood is as old as mankind, and our problem is to prevent it from prevailing exclusively in the world.

I said that the call for Allah is two kinds: a sincere one marked with adopting the Quran, collaboration, and accepting the other, whereas the second kind is a self ego oriented call and it is marked with innovation, competition and excluding the other.

Clarifying the term "Updating the religious speech":

This religion is a divine one and not a man made one which could be a subject of alteration, development, renewal, deletion and addition. It is the religion of Allah:

(This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.)

[Al-Ma'idah', 3]

According to scholars: perfection is in the quality of handling the topics, and completion is in the number of topics tackled by the religion.

When the religion was voided from its essence and when its principles were subject of alteration, people tended to update the religious speech but not the religion.

That is why I have mentioned in front of his Excellency (the headmaster of the university) that updating the religious speech is limited to removing any extrinsic contents which don't belong to the religion.

Mr. Ayman:

This is the conception of updating the religious speech!

The world's salvation lies in the true Islam:

Dr. Rateb:

I have mentioned also a statement said by a western scientist from North America, who converted to Islam and had the chance to meet the Islamic community in Britain, he said:

"I don't believe the Islamic world is able to catch up with the west on the short run because of the wide gap between the two, yet I believe beyond doubt that the entire world will come to its knees before Muslims, not due to their power but because in Islam lies the salvation of the world, and this requires that Muslims should comprehend their religion rightly, apply it correctly and offer it skillfully to the other side".

Mr. Ayman:

They are (the other party) armed with falsehood and they exhibit it skillfully.

Dr. Rateb:

They work at night and we sleep in broad daylight.

Mr. Ayman:

That was an outstanding introduction for inimitability in the noble Quran, is it old science or a recent one?

Dr.

Rateb:

We need a general view of inimitability.

The root of inimitability:



Inimitability in its foundation starts from the perfection in creation which indicates perfection in actions (by the creator).

This universe manifests an absolute perfection of its creator, to such an extent that it was said: "The universe is a silent Quran, Quran is a speaking universe, and the prophet PBUH is a walking Quran (the teachings of the Quran reflected on his character).

This Great God decreed for His creations to send to them some people (prophets) whose mission was to guide them to the path of safety and happiness. Given man is molded to love his/her existence, safety, continuity and perfection of his/her existence, Allah sent people from mankind as messengers of His, and He provided them with books in which He included His orders of dos and don'ts and these books are the manuals (so to speak) of the Creator to His creations.

Man is considered as the most complicated machine in the universe, and it is a miraculous complication not one of disability, and since this very complicated delicate machine has a wise creator, and since this creator put a manual for operating and maintaining this machine, man should follow this manual if he/she was keen on his/her safety and happiness.

On the other side, the natural response of those, who follow their desires uncontrollably whenever a messenger of Allah is sent to them, is to accuse him of lying:

(And those who disbelieve, say: "You (O Muhammad) are not a Messenger)

[Ar-Ra'd, 43]

The miracle of prophet Mohammad PBUH is continuous:

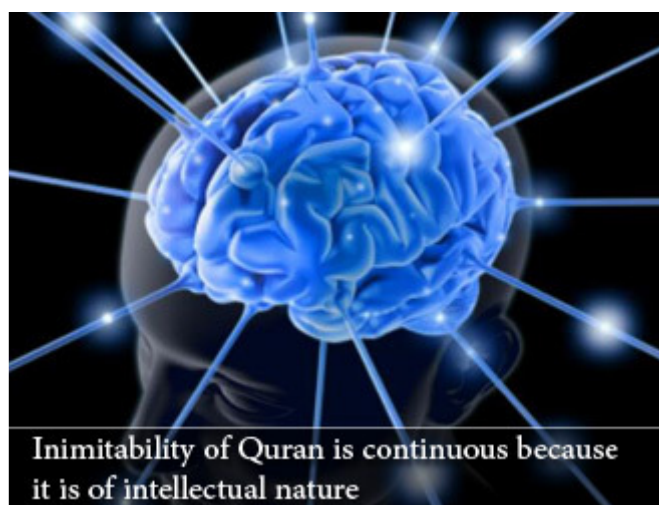


How will Allah give a proof to His messenger that he is a messenger ? The problem lies therein, again, how will Allah give a proof to those to whom the messenger was sent that he is a messenger of God?

Since no vision can grasp Him (i.e. Allah can't be seen by people), hence, Allah will give this person (His messenger) a miracle which will break the laws of the universe and which can't be done but by the creator of heavens and earth. This miracle will be Allah's testimony to all human race that this person is His messenger. This applies to all previous prophets, and since all previous prophets were sent exclusively to their people, thus their miracles were of tangible nature, like when fire didn't burn our Master Ibrahim, also our Master Moses' miracle was mentioned in Quran, Allah says:

(Then [Musa (Moses)]threw his stick and behold! it was a serpent, manifest! And he drew out his hand, and behold! it was white (with radiance) for the beholders.)

[Al-A'raf, 107-108]



Our Master Jesus brought the dead to life, hence, all those miracles were of tangible nature, namely, they happened once, exactly like lighting a match stick, as it will light once and goes out and becomes just news that will be believed by whoever believes it and will be disbelieved by whoever disbelieves it. Since the prophet PBUH is the Seal (the last) of the Prophets and messengers, since he was sent to all mankind, and since his book is the seal of all books, hence, his miracle should be continuous, and it will not be continuous if it was of tangible nature, yet, it will be continuous only if it was of intellectual nature.

The most exalted act of worship in Islam is knowing Allah:

There are one thousand and three hundred verses in Quran about the universe. A believer should obey whenever reciting an Ayah with an order within, he/she should abstain from doing an act whenever reciting an Ayah with a prohibition within, he/she should strive to attain paradise whenever reciting an Ayah in which people of paradise are described, he/she should avoid hellfire even by donating half a date whenever reciting an Ayah in which people of hellfire are described, and he/she should take a lesson whenever reciting a story of ancient nations who were doomed, but what should he/she do when reciting 1300 Ayahs about the universe? He/she should reflect on the creation of heavens and earth, Allah says:

(Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.)

[Aal-'Imran, 190-191]

"Think" as a verb in the Ayah is in a "present tense" which indicates continuity, and actually, knowing Allah is the most exalted act of worship, because it is the origin of Islam.

It is impossible to know Allah and never love Him, and it is impossible to love Him and never obey Him. Hence whenever one knows the law-giver and then knows the law, he/she will be devotedly obedient to the law-giver, whereas by knowing the law before knowing the law-giver, one will break away from obeying the law, and unfortunately, this is the reality of Muslims nowadays.

Inimitability is Allah's testimony that Quran is His words:

Therefore, inimitability is Allah's testimony to His creations that the Noble Quran is His words. In fact, inimitability can be summarized in two words: The Creator of universes is the One who sent down the Quran, and inimitability is within the latter,

and it is Allah's testimony to the creations that the prophet PBUH is His messenger.

The development of inimitability:

Mr. Ayman:

There was a development in inimitability, for when the Quran was revealed to the people of Quraish (masters of the Arabic language) and though they have the most eloquent people among them, they were unable to bring something similar to it, and they knew at the time that it is a supernal book.

Allah the Almighty challenged them to bring something similar to Quran but they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another. Hence, inimitability at that time was rhetorical within the logic in which Arab lived. The question to be asked is: How did inimitability develop by time to be scientific?

The prophet PBUH refrained from interpreting the verses about the universe:

Dr. Rateb:

In fact, though hundreds of Ahadith of the prophet PBUH were reported in respect of matters related to worship, none was reported in regard of the Ayahs about the universe, why?

This could be either due to a personal point of view of His (the prophet PBUH), or he was instructed by Allah to do so. I think the reason behind it is that any simple interpretation that could be conceived by the esteemed companions according to their findings will not be convenient to us in this era (according to our findings), and if the prophet PBUH interpreted those Ayahs as they should be after he "did see, of the Greatest Signs, of his Lord (Allah)", this interpretation will be strange to the companions' logic.

Hence he refrained from interpreting those Ayahs whether because he was instructed by Allah to do so, or he did so on his own accord, better yet, he kept these Ayahs (without interpretation) as evidence of inimitability, for the more the science progresses, the more is shown of Quran's greatness.

That is why Imam Ali, May Allah be pleased with him, said that in Quran there are Ayahs that are not interpreted yet.

The scientific breakthroughs show the greatness of Quran:



We recite one of those Ayahs for a thousand years, and out of a sudden, a scientific breakthrough reflects it harmoniously.

Take for example the first manned spaceship that was sent to the space, as the minute the astronauts crossed the sixty five thousand Kilometer's atmospheric layer, one of them shouted we have become blind. At that very moment, Farooq Al Baz (one of the astronomers) was in the base from which the spaceship took off and he said: this fact is mentioned in Quran.

The scientific explanation for feeling blindness in space comes from a phenomenon called "light scattering" due to which we have day light on earth even in places where the sun rays don't reach, and this day light comes from the sun rays that are shining on the specks in the air which in turn reflects those rays on other specks that are not reached by the sun, and this phenomenon vanishes the minute we cross the atmospheric layer, and the space turns into a total darkness. This Ayah was descended 1400 years ago and it indicates this scientific phenomenon.

Mr. Ayman:

What is the Ayah?

An example of Quranic inimitability:

Dr. Rateb:



(And even if We opened to them a gate from the heaven and they were to continue ascending thereto, They would surely say: "Our eyes have been (as if) dazzled. Nay, we are a people bewitched.")

[AL-Hijr, 14-15]

One day NASA, the largest space administration, displayed a photo of a super nova of a star named cat's eye, and if you look at it without reading any comment, you will never have doubts not for a second that it is Damask rose by all means of the word.

It has dark red petals with bright blue leaves, and its blue cup in the middle, and the comment said: "A super nova of a star called cat's eye that is 3000 light years away from us".

1400 years ago, the following Ayah was descended, Allah says:

(Then when the heaven is rent asunder, and it becomes rosy or red like red-oil, or red hide. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinns and men) deny?)

[Ar-Rahman, 37-38]

Mr. Ayman:
Glory is to Allah.

The Quran is the words of the creator of mankind (i.e. Allah):

Dr. Rateb:
You fly in a very advanced plane in which people sit on luxurious comfortable seventy seven seats, eating and drinking, and upon reading the following Ayah:

(And (He has created) horses, mules and donkeys, for you to ride and as an adornment.)

[An-Nahl, 8]

You will realize that the following part is not human's words rather the words of human's creator, Allah says:

(And He creates (other) things of which you have no knowledge.)

[An-Nahl, 8]

Mr. Ayman:

Therefore, you have mentioned a while ago that the prophet PBUH didn't interpret these Ayahs (about the universe) due to a profound wisdom, however, there are Ayahs like:

(They ask you concerning menstruation.)

[Al-Baqarah, 222]

(And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnain.)

[Al-Kahf, 83]

(They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons.)

[Al-Baqarah, 189]

But we will continue after this break so stay with us.

Welcome back dear listeners.

Shaikh Mohammad Al Ghazali, May Allah have mercy on his soul, said:

"How can a narrow-minded, visionless, person who walks like the lost cattle, realize the charming omnipotence, the delicacy of wisdom, and the Exalted Great Creator; this person lacks cognizing the pages of the universe which is nothing but a lesson in chemistry and nature, a pious prayer, and touring the world of astronomy, is a Tasbeeh (glorification) and Tahmeed (praising)."

The one who loves Allah more is the one with superior reasoning:

Dr. Rateb:

May Allah bless you dear Mr. Ayman.

When our Master Khaled converted to Islam in a very delayed time, the prophet PBUH said to him an outstanding statement, he said: "I knew that you have an open mind and I prayed that it would lead you to safety"

This statement means that man will be closer to faith when he/she owns more reasoning.

It was mentioned in the relic:

((The one who loves Allah the most is the one with superior reasoning))

If you are pursuing worldly life, then seek knowledge, and if you are pursuing the hereafter, then also seek knowledge.

Mr. Ayman:

Dr. Rateb, but also we know that there are scientifically advanced nations who worship cows, and they are not guided to Allah the Almighty yet (despite their scientific achievements).

Everything in the universe indicates Allah's existence:

Dr. Rateb:

The person, who is like you have mentioned, is like a very advanced camera which can give you the best quality pictures, yet, it doesn't have a film in it, and consequently, this camera is worthless. Same goes for the person who pursues worldly life and he/she is very clever either he/she is in a spaceship or is working using a microscope where he/she can observe miracles, however, he/she is seeking only money and fame, but not guidance, and hence, his/her advanced accurate gadgets are worthless on the personal level, therefore:

(And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it)

[Al-Isra', 19]

(Whoever wishes for the quick-passing (transitory enjoyment of this world), We readily grant him what We will for whom We like. Then, afterwards, We have appointed for him Hell, he will burn therein disgraced and rejected, (far away from Allah's Mercy). And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it, with the necessary effort due for it (i.e. do righteous deeds of Allah's Obedience) while he is a believer (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism), then such are the ones whose striving shall be appreciated, thanked and rewarded (by Allah). To each these as well as those We bestow from the Bounties of your Lord. And the Bounties of your Lord can never be forbidden.)

[Al-Isra', 19]

Cleverness does not count in the equation that is mentioned in the pervious Ayah. I imagine that man should reflect on the universe in order to believe in the Quran (after being a believer in the first place):

(Verily, in this is a sign for you if you are indeed believers.)

[Al-Baqarah, 34]

Why is that?

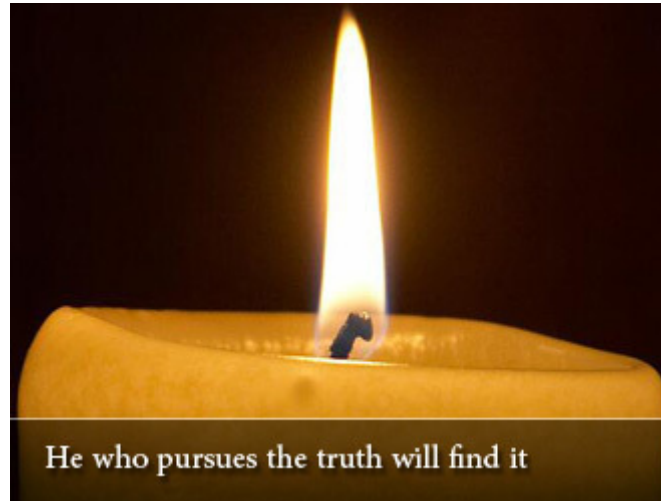
When you take the decision to be a believer, then every sign in front of you will lead you to Allah.

Water denotes the brook, and footprints denote marching.

Verify everything in the universe leads you to Allah, however, if you don't take that serious momentous decision (to be a believer), you will not be guided to Allah even

if you are in a space station watching a new galaxy every day, and even if you are working on a microscope observing the human cell.

He who pursues the truth will find it:



(And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it)

[Al-Isra', 19]

**(Whoever wishes for the quick-passing (transitory enjoyment of this world),
We readily grant him what We will for whom We like.)**

[Al-Isra', 18]

(So, when they forgot (the warning) with which they had been reminded, We opened to them the gates of every (pleasant) thing, until in the midst of their enjoyment in that which they were given, all of a sudden, We took them to punishment, and lo! They were plunged into destruction with deep regrets and sorrows.)

[Al-An'am, 44]

The "gates" in this Ayah indicate knowledge and science.
Hence, it is all about seeking the truth, and let me tell you something from the bottom of my heart: By Allah, it is impossible to seek the truth and not find it.

(As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allah's Religion - Islamic Monotheism). And verily, Allah is with the Muhsinun (good doers).")

[Al-Ankabut, 69]

Mr. Ayman:

We are running out of time dear Dr. Rateb and you are like a sea in your knowledge, and I want to fully tackle this topic.

I have asked before taking a break about three Ayahs about which the companion asked.

(They ask you concerning menstruation.)

[Al-Baqarah, 222]

(And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnain.)

[Al-Kahf, 83]

(They ask you (O Muhammad) about the new moons.)

[Al-Baqarah, 189]

The wisdom behind not interpreting the verses of the universe:

Dr. Rateb:

(And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor).)

[Al-Baqarah, 186]

Scholars deduced the following fact from the previous Ayah: there is no mediator between one and his Lord.

In fact, the prophet PBUH gave an answer for every question addressed to him, yet he refrained from answering some of them according to instructions from Allah the Almighty.

As for scientific inimitability in the companions' era, I for one believe that when they knew Allah and they drew very close to Him, every means was dispensable to them, exactly like a person in the sea, for he sees it, touches it, smells it, and feels it in every cell of his body, and thus he doesn't need any proof to assure him that he is in the sea. Similarly, when the companions drew near Allah, they reached everything.

((O, son of Adam, seek me you find me, and when you find me you find everything))

[Mentioned in relic]

In our era, we are driven away from our religion by prevailing doubts, delusions, and thoughts, and thus, we are in dire need for clues, signs, miracles, and a totally different life.

Apparently, the companions were of exceptional nature to deserve being contemporary with the master of mankind and the most beloved to Allah (i.e. the prophet PBUH), and this fact was indicated by the prophet through the following Hadith:

((Allah has chosen me, and He has chosen my Companions for me.))

[Al Jame'e Al Sagheer, a weak authenticated Hadith]

Mr. Ayman:

Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood said: (The companions) were the deepest (among Muslims of all times) in faith and the simplest in nature, and they embraced faith by their innate.

One should simplify Islam instead of complicating it:

Dr. Rateb:

Very true Mr. Ayman, the religion is just like air, and all you have to do is to simply breathe in, it can't be monopolized by any party, region, county, era, sect, school of thought or cult, for it is the religion of Allah, and thus it should be simple, and our role will be to simplify, apply, and rationalize it.

The companions were the best among believers of all times:

Mr. Ayman:

Let us start with the stance of those who oppose the inimitability in the Noble Quran.

Abu Isaak Al Shatibi, who is one of the scholars in the 8th Hujri century, said: "The companions and their successors were the most knowledgeable and jurisprudents, and their faith was the deepest though they didn't know scientific inimitability in the noble Quran, so would there be any generations with a deeper faith (than the first generation)?"

Also Dr. Aishah Abdulrahman said:

"I dread the fact that we might be following a method other than the one followed by the companions and their successors, and in case of being so, we will break away from the path of the prophet PBUH."

The point of view of the opposers to inimitability:

Dr. Rateb:

Inimitability will be a sledge hammer with which we will be tearing down the religion in case of hasting to connect any unproved scientific statement with a Quranic Ayah, and by such an act, we are giving the other party a golden opportunity to criticize the Quran. What do you think the other party will do in such case?

They will prove the scientific statement wrong (which is unproved scientifically in

the first place), then they will criticize the Noble Quran (in a trial to prove it wrong as well).

Accordingly, though inimitability is one of the strongest props of faith and is most needed nowadays, it will be a sledge hammer in case we misused it or weren't cautious about its controls.

Those who refused this method (inimitability) might be partially right (because of this), but they will be totally wrong if they refuse it when the Quranic Ayah is evidence-based, the scientific breakthrough is a proved fact, and there is an accordance between the two in a complete and spontaneous way, for this is what inimitability is all about.

I have mentioned earlier that you, as a Quran reciter, must have a personal stance towards the Ayahs about the universe, didn't I? This stance is inimitability itself, for the One who created the universes is the One who revealed the Noble Quran.

Mr. Ayman:

But Sayed Kutub said: "Scientific theories are subject to change", so how can we connect something durable (Quran) with something changeable (science), for Allah's words are durable, whereas this proven theory today might change tomorrow, and sorry to ask this, but I am representing the other point of view?

The Quranic articulation embraces all scientific breakthroughs:

Dr. Rateb:

The answer to that question is that the Quranic articulation embraces all these changes, and the following Ayah is an example, Allah says:

(By the sky (having rain clouds) which gives rain, again and again.)

[At-Tariq, 11]

In some eras, this Ayah was interpreted as follows: seas' water evaporates and forms clouds which give rain (again and again):

(By the sky (having rain clouds) which gives rain, again and again.)

[At-Tariq, 11]

The water's steam turns into rain. However, when the science developed and there was TV and Radio broadcasting and electromagnetic waves that are sent to the space, the ionosphere reflects them back to the earth (again and again):

(By the sky (having rain clouds) which gives rain, again and again.)

[At-Tariq, 11]

Later on, science developed and scientists found out about all the movement of planets and stars in the universe, and lest they are moving, the universe will turn into one big mass according to the laws of gravitation which say that the bigger

mass gravitates the smaller mass, however, the moving balance in the universe makes every star rotate around another star in a closed orbit and come back to where it started (again and again), and this is a third interpretation for the previous Ayah.

Accordingly, I for one believe that the Quranic articulation is from the One, and the Dayyan (the judge: i.e. Allah) and not from human. Hence, Ayahs about the universe are able to embrace all coming scientific possibilities.

Mr. Ayman:

Therefore, we have to differentiate between scientific interpretation and scientific inimitability, is that true?

The difference between scientific interpretation and inimitability:

Dr. Rateb:

Absolutely! There is a huge difference between scientific interpretation and scientific inimitability.

The companions loved the prophet so much, so they assumed that the sun eclipsed due to the death of Ibrahim, son of the prophet PBUH, and in response to these assumptions, the prophet PBUH addressed them by saying:

((The sun and the moon are two signs amongst the signs of Allah. They do not eclipse because of someone's death or life.))

Hence, the prophet PBUH construed the eclipse scientifically and he refused those assumptions.

Mr. Ayman:

That was a creed rectifying.

Dr. Rateb:

He just construed the eclipse scientifically, but miracles are a literal break to the laws of the universe:

(Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) [above all that (evil) they associate with Him][Tafsir Qurtubi, Vol. 10, Page 204]Who took His slave (Muhammad) for a journey by night)

[AL-Isra', 1]

A human being (the prophet PBUH) who crossed the distance between Mecca and Qudos (Jerusalem) then the distant between Qudos and heaven in such a short time, breaks the laws of the universe.

1- Prophets' miracles break the universal laws:

Accordingly, I have to differentiate between a scientific miracle and a prophetic miracle, as the latter breaks the laws of the universe and this is to be tackled in another lecture.

2- The inimitability is a scientific breakthrough unto itself:

As for the scientific inimitability, it is about scientific breakthroughs, namely, there are hints in the noble Quran that indicate facts which are discovered recently but were unknown to people in the prophetic era, and the eras all over the world contemporary with it. Inimitability means that the Creator of the universes is the One who (sent down) revealed this Quran.

Since the other party believes only in science, hence, inimitability occupies the highest position in Muslim's creed, for it is all about science. Given scientific topics are irrefutable, inimitability is the most effective way, the widest gate, and the shortest path to persuade the other party with the eligibility of our religion.

The proof that the holy Quran precedes any scientific breakthrough:

Mr. Ayman:

You are saying that we persuade them through things they know, and we guide them to our religion.

There is another suspicion the opposers have against this topic, and it is something I don't second, however I should ask it on behalf of the other party. Some say: How do you expect the Quran to rule if you make it a follower (to science)? Namely, we say that science proved this or that, and since it is mentioned in the Quran, then the Quran is right.

Dr. Rateb:

This is a big mistake.

Mr. Ayman:

Muslims usually wait for scientific breakthroughs and if they are mentioned in the noble Quran they talk about it. The question to be asked is: since the Quran descended 1400 years ago, why didn't we (as an Islamic nation) took the lead in finding these scientific facts between the lines of the Quran instead of stealing these breakthroughs and talking about them when they match the Quran, the worst yet, we sometimes make changes in the interpretation of the Quranic text in order to match them?

1- Reasoning is connected with reality and revelation is connected to the absolute truth:

Dr. Rateb:

It is unacceptable and wrong to praise the Quran when it matches, in some of its Ayahs, any scientific breakthrough, because we will be considering science as the origin, while the opposite should happen, and we should praise science when it matches the Quran.

Reasoning is connected with reality, and if you bring to life a person who died one hundred years ago and tell him that there is a small device through which you can talk with a person on the other side of the world (the cellular phone), or if you tell

him that you have 5000 books on a CD, this person will not believe you because his reasoning is connected with the reality (he lived one hundred years ago). On the other hand, revelation is connected with the absolute truth.

We have reasoning and reported divine revelation, and the latter is the origin. Again, it is wrong to praise the Quran when it matches, in some of its Ayahs, any scientific breakthrough, and it is unacceptable, because we will be considering science as the origin, while the opposite should happen, and we should praise science when it matches Quran.

The more advanced science becomes, the more it unfolds sides of greatness in this Noble Quran.

Hence, this suspicion is wrong because you are giving a false impression to the listener that science is the origin, this is the answer for the first thing.

2- We as Muslims failed in achieving any scientific breakthrough:

As for the second thing, Allah says:

(We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their ourselves)

[Fussilat, 53]

There is a speaker saying: (We will) and “will” indicates future, namely, the Quranic hints denotes future scientific topics unknown to the companions of the prophet and to many generations to come. Now the speaker (Allah) said (We will show them), who are they?

They are the addressees (the believers) who are meant by these Ayahs, but this raises a question: why were we careless and preceded by westerns, though any matching between a breakthrough and any Ayah is a flip over to the other party? A scientist from Egypt once read the following Ayah:

(and he became clear-sighted)

[Yusuf, 96]

having been inspired by it, he brought a shirt and ran some tests on it , to find out that it had sweat within, and accordingly, he studied the sweat and he found sixty four components in it, so he started applying them one by one on eyes with cataract, only one substance (which is urea (guanidine).) proved to be effective in curing cataract, and he is in the process of developing eye drops after being inspired by this Ayah.

We were careless in discovering the universe through the Quranic Ayahs, Allah says:

(We will show them Our Signs)

[Fussilat, 53]

Questions from the listeners:

Mr. Ayman:

We are receiving a lot of phone calls since you started, so we will take as many calls as we can , and we will start with the first caller:

The definition and technicality of cloning:

Q: I have a question of two parts: Some Muslim scholars considered cloning techniques useful in understanding the biological secret behind the (lonegeivity of Noah's life) or the long life which Noah PBUH lived which extended to almost a thousand years, so my question is: Does cloning challenge the divine omnipotence considering the challenge addressed to people (which is mentioned in Quran) to create anything from nothing, and Allah knows better, thank you?

Mr.

Ayman:

Another call from brother Tarek from Al Shariqah.

What is the width of paradise?

I want to thank you for this great program, and in fact I feel that I am in front of a huge pyramid and one of the most notable scholars of the nation, and I invoke Allah to help us make use of his knowledge.

Actually, whenever we sit next to scholars, we can feel this loftiness because they are the honor of this nation.

We pray to Allah to make them blessed in age, and to let us make use of their knowledge. My question is that Allah promised believers with paradise, and when Allah described it He said that its width is like the width of heaven and earth that is prepared for the pious, so if this is the width, then what is the length of it? Where is the hellfire and where is the length of it?

The definition of inimitability according to scholars:

Mr. Ayman:

Another call, brother Mohammad from Rass Al Khaimah.

Assalam Alaikum Wa Rahmatoo Allah wa Barakatoh, I have known Dr. Rateb from Tawooseyah mosque in Damascus, and he was a very active scholar who touched people with reality , not to mention his good impact in Syria and the world, moreover, he encouraged new proselytizers to take their responsibilities of being in charge of this nation, so he has an upper hand on this nation, with regard to inimitability:

1- Mankind is incapable of writing any book similar to the Quran:

Scholars defined inimitability in two ways, the first one: it is kind of miraculousness, namely, the incapability of mankind to bring something similar to the noble Quran whether in its articulation, legislations, or the unseen.

2- Allah didn't give mankind the ability of writing a book similar to the Quran:

The second definition: Allah the Almighty didn't give mankind the ability, He withdrew their activeness, and He restrained tongues from bringing something similar to the Quran. What I want to say by mentioning the two definitions is that the purpose of inimitability shouldn't drive us away from guiding people to the truth, and thus we should tell people that the Quran is a miracle in its legislations, articulation, the unseen and in everything in it, and it invites everyone to it, and Allah is inviting you to hold on to this religion, to be convinced with it through inimitability, thank you.

Mr. Ayman:

Brother Ahmad from Abu Dabi. Assalam Alaikum, We want to thank you for this useful program and we wish you success.

The rotation of the earth:

My question is about the following Ayah:

(And you will see the mountains and think them solid, but they shall pass away as the passing away of the clouds)

[An-Naml, 88]

Should this Ayah mean that the earth is rotating, because some interpreters consider the sun that is rotating according to the following Ayah:

(And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (appointed). That is the Decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.)

[Ya-Sin, 38]

They said that the earth is motionless and the sun is the one that is rotating, thank you.

Mr. Ayman:

We have Mona on the line, I want please to ask you not to give us questions about certain Ayahs, for this is not the topic of this meeting, yet our topic is inimitability in the Noble Quran between supporters and opposers and who of the two a believer should follow, so ask something related to it please.

Mankind considers the Mosquito as the most trivial creature:

Dr. Rateb:



Let me give you an example, when Allah says:

(Verily, Allah is not ashamed to set forth a parable even of a mosquito or so much more)

[Al-Baqarah, 26]

The mosquito is the most trivial creature from the human point of view, and this was indicated by the prophet PBUH when he said:

((If this world had the value of a mosquito's wing in the sight of Allah, no disbeliever would have had a drink of water from it))

[Tirmizi]

After the electronic microscope was invented in which we magnify things 400 thousand times, they found out that the eye of the mosquito contains one hundred eyes, its mouth has forty eight teeth, and its chest has three hearts, one central heart and two others for each wing.

Mr. Ayman:

The mosquito?

The miracles of Allah in creating the mosquito:

Dr. Rateb:

Each heart of the mosquito has two atriums, two ventricles, and two valves; that it has infra red receptive system that planes don't have –mosquitoes are able to see objects by the heat produced by these objects, not by their colors, shapes or mass; it has blood analysis system –a mosquito inserts its trunk in a person's flesh, takes a blood sample and analyzes it as not all kinds of blood suit its needs, to the extent that if two brothers happen to be in the same bed, it stings one of them and not the other. Furthermore, a mosquito has an anesthetic system –to avoid getting killed: the mosquito anesthetizes the skin before inserting its trunk so by the time the person feels the sting, it is high up in the air. Its trunk has six knives, four of them

to cut the skin in a square shape, and the two other knives form a straw to suck blood. The mosquito has claws, in case it alights on a rough surface, and suckers, in case it alights on a smooth surface such as glass. Now after reading all these facts, you are able to understand Allah's saying:

(Verily, Allah is not ashamed to set forth a parable even of a mosquito or so much more)

[Al-Baqarah, 26]

The miracles of Allah in creating the whale:



Now what is "so much more" is the blue whale which weighs 150 tons: fifty tons of fat, another fifty tons of flesh, and the third fifty tons are bones. A whale can give you ninety barrels of oil. Its average meal is four tons. Its baby breastfeeds three hundred Kilograms of milk, three times a day, I think this, by all means, is the meaning of "or so much more".

(you can see no fault in the creations of the Most Beneficent)

[Al-Mulk, 3]

The miracles of Allah in creating the spider:

Mr. Ayman:

The rest of the Ayah goes as follows:

(And as for those who believe, they know that it is the Truth from their Lord, but as for those who disbelieve, they say: "What did Allah intend by this parable?")

[Al-Baqarah, 26]

These are sides of the inimitability in this Ayah:

(The likeness of those who take Auliya' (protectors and helpers) other than Allah is as the likeness of a spider, who builds (for itself) a house, but verily, the frailest (weakest) of houses is the spider's house)

[Al-Ankabut, 41]

Mentioning the spider net not the spider silk is a miracle:



A suspicion prevailed the internet about the Ayah of spider silk, for the recent science proved it to be stronger than steel, so where is the inimitability in this Ayah?

Dr. Rateb:

It simulates the weak household, as the housewife eats its husband and its babies, and same goes for the frailest families in the society.

Mr. Ayman:

House and not silk.

Dr. Rateb:

There will be no house for the frail family.

Mr. Ayman:

Allah didn't say frailest silk yet He said frailest house.

Dr. Rateb:

The spider silk is five times stronger than steel , however the house of a spider is not, same goes for a human family, so if a family turns away from Allah, and it has lot of domestic conflicts, the house will not protect that family from falling apart.

Mr. Ayman:

Well this suspicion is refuted, glory be to Allah. Thomas Beker converted to Islam after he was inspired by the inimitability in Quran.

Allah's miracles in the universe:

Dr. Rateb:

Sir, between the earth and the nearest blazing star is 4 light years.

The light travels in a speed of 300 thousands kilometers per second, so how much does it cover in one minute? We multiply by 60, in one hour we multiply by 60, in one day we multiply by 24, in one year we multiply by 365 and in 4 years we multiply by 4 and the result would be the distance between earth and the nearest blazing star in kilometers.

If we want to reach this star using a normal earthy vehicle, how many hours do we need to reach it?

If we divided by 24, how many days do we need? If we divided by 365, how many years do we need? To reach this nearest blazing star by an earthy vehicle we will need 50 million years, so 4 light years equals 50 million years so you would know the meaning of 4 light years, the trip will take 50 million years.

Average age of man is 70 years; and by comparison how many years do we need to reach the pole star which is 4000 light years away from earth? When will we reach Andromeda galaxy? It is 2 million light years away from us.

When will we reach a new star that is discovered which is 20 billion light years away from us?

The Ayah goes as follows:

(So I swear by Mawaqi (setting or the mansions, etc.) of the stars (they traverse). And verily, that is indeed a great oath, if you but know.)

[Al-Waqi'ah, 75-76]

(It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah.)

[Fatir, 28]

This Ayah will bring any astronomer to his knees, as settings here means that the object (star) of this setting isn't there, because this star's light traveled to us in the light speed which is 300 thousands kilometers per second and kept traveling for 20 billion years till this light reached us, while the star's speed is 240 thousands kilometers per second, where is it now? So what we are seeing isn't a star, yet it is the setting of the star, the same goes for anything you see in the sky, for it is untrue.

There is an extensive field of inimitability:

Mr. Ayman:

Actually, inimitability in the Noble Quran and these scientific facts are an extensive field to tackle, and I think you have written many books in that field.

Dr. Rateb:

I have written an encyclopedia in inimitability, and it is accredited to be taught in universities.

Mr. Ayman:

It is a huge encyclopedia which needs many meetings to cover.

We will go back to the same topic after this break, we will answer all the questions we have received over the phone, and we will continue tackling the inimitability in the Noble Quran between supporters and opposers.

Mr. Ayman:

Welcome back.

One of the scholars said describing the noble Quran: It is like a twister which unfolds secrets, and it is beyond time and place.

We will answer the questions of the listeners who called us.

Brother Ali asks about cloning, is it considered as a challenge to the divine omnipotence?

Explaining the cloning and its harmful effects:

Dr. Rateb:



Upon considering that marriage is the absolute perfect divine design for reproducing, and any other way will go to the worse, why is that? It is because Allah says:

(Verily, We have created man from Nutfah drops of mixed semen (discharge of man and woman))

[Al-Insan, 2]

When the sperm fertilizes the ovum, the twenty three genes of each one of them (with the hundreds thousands features within) will combine in the newborn giving it the more dominant features of the father and the mother, and that is why the prophet PBUH said:

((Ighrariboo La Tadwoo (Get married from people other than relatives lest your offspring gets weaker).))

However, when we take a cell from an animal and plant it in a female womb, we will be reproducing weakness instead of having stronger offspring. This is the reason behind the failure of cloning and the big media fuss about it.

If we were to use cloning for curing illnesses then it is fine in the sight of Allah, however, it is very wrong to resort to it in reproducing, given marriage (the normal way to have children) is available and women and men are getting married normally in order to have children.

Mr. Ayman:

Some said they will clone Jesus again for the world's salvation because we have a drop of blood from his trace.

Dr. Rateb:

Well, along the same line, we dread that they clone dictators as well, and in that case we will be having a problem.

Mr. Ayman:

Brother Tarik from Al Shariqah asked about the width of heaven and earth, where is the length of it?

Defining the width of heavens and earth:

Dr. Rateb:

Actually when you exhibit your goods in a window case you show part of it, same goes for describing paradise, for Allah simplified the bliss of paradise by mentioning the fruits in it and by describing its width to let us imagine how beautiful and well-built paradise is. These are some of the senses of the Ayah.

Mr. Ayman:

Brother Mohammad from Rass Al Khaimah assumed that inimitability in Quran came from depriving mankind from the ability.

Dr. Rateb:

This has to do with the miraculous articulation of Quran.

Mr. Ayman:

Thank you for this piece of information.

Brother Ahmad from Abu Dabi:

(And you will see the mountains and think them solid, but they shall pass away as the passing away of the clouds.)

[An-Naml, 88]

The rotation of the earth around the sun:

Dr. Rateb:

It indicates earth's rotation. You assume that this mountain is still, yet it is passing away silently like clouds.

Mr. Ayman:

He said this Ayah indicates that the sun is rotating and the earth is still.

Dr. Rateb:

(And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (appointed). That is the Decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.)

[Ya-Sin, 38]

The sun, including all the solar system, is running. This ayah is crystal clear. It is an evidence-based fact that the earth is rotating around the sun and this is something you can observe with bare eye.

Mr. Ayman:

Actually, we will go deeper in all the questions related to our topic for this meeting.

Dr. Rateb:

If I travel to USA and over there they show me their atlas in which I found Damascus in the location of Beirut, will I believe their atlas? Reality is more powerful.

Other sides of inimitability in the noble Quran:

Mr. Ayman:

Let us go back to our important topic for this meeting which is inimitability in Quran between supporters and opposers. Some said that adopting inimitability makes Quran a subject of false interpretation and takes away its sanctity and reverence.

In my hands is a photo which I downloaded from the internet, in which we see the word "Allah". Three Algerian scientists intended to meet the Vatican's Pope Benedict XVI trying to achieve mutual respect between religions, and in order to inform the west of the new breakthroughs which prove the divine nature of Quran and Islam.

The astronomer Laut Botero stated in Al Jazeera net that all the wars and destruction all over the world are results of clash of civilizations, and thus, by offering scientific proofs of the inimitability in the Noble Quran, we will be diffusing enmity between Islam and the other party.

This text is taken literally from the internet.

The breakthrough is a result of a combination between morphology and arithmetic in calculating the successive order of Surats and Ayahs in the noble Quran to form at the end the two words: Allah and Muhammad.

In this photo we see the two words, and here you can see the diagram in which they use morphology and arithmetic, and they say that this is a miracle of Quran, so what do you think?

Verifying every scientific breakthrough before adopting it:

Dr. Rateb:

Personally, I am not interested in such photos, and it is similar to those photos in which they show the word Allah on a bee hive, on a human heart, on sea waves, or on Dutch forest and so forth.

I believe that such photos have no effect, yet others are using our naivety, and to this photo and the like I say: my scientific stance towards all this is that we need to check their validity before adopting them.

Mr. Ayman:

Where is the truth Dr. Rateb? In the “nine eleven” crisis they said: it is mentioned in Al Taubah Surat.

Dr. Rateb:

We didn't do it to begin with, so how come we assure people that we did it and we are proving that using Ayahs from Quran, this is unacceptable.

The frame of reference of inimitability:

Mr. Ayman:

So what are the limitations to inimitability in the Noble Quran?

Dr. Rateb:

Inimitability is limited to scientific proven facts only.

The scientific fact is defined as follows: it is the description that is congruent with reality and proved by evidence. If we cancel the evidence, it will turn into a myth, and if we cancel the reality, it will turn into ignorance.

The scientific fact is the scientific connection between two changeable evidence-based things that are proved by reality. Hence, we adopt only the scientific fact according to these measures and descriptions.

Take for example metals which expand by heat, this is a scientific fact, better yet it is a law that is agreed upon, evidence-based and it is congruent with reality. The scientific fact also should be supported spontaneously by the Ayah that is Qati'yah (having definite evidences), not Zannia (having indefinite evidences assumptions).

Again, the ayah should have a definite meaning, and the scientific fact should be evidence-based and congruent with reality, and finally the congruity between the two should be spontaneous and complete, and this is to be categorized under the topic of inimitability.

When does science contradict with Quran?

When do science and the Noble Quran contradict with each other? The answer to that question is: This happens when one of them is not Haddi (definite), namely, either the Ayah Zanniyaht Al Dalalah (indefinite) or the scientific fact is not true.

As I have stated earlier, inimitability in the Noble Quran is one of the pillars of faith, however hastiness in this matter turns it into a sledge hammer with which we will be tearing down faith, and from this point of view, I second those who opposed inimitability.

Mr. Ayman:

But interpreters through time adopted wrong interpretations of some Ayahs, and we always read in interpreting books: Saeed Bin al Musayeb said so and so, and Saeed Bin Jubair said so and so, whereas Ibn Abbass said so and so, while Al

Hasan Al Basri said something else, so don't these different interpretations have negative impact on the sanctity of the Noble Quran?

The noble Quran has a polysemous nature:

Dr. Rateb:

Have you ever asked yourself why the prophet PBUH didn't interpret Quran once and for all? To answer that question I will say that if he did, then Quran (as a miracle) will be over.

No human is able to comprehend the entire noble Quran, as the latter is polysemous and its miracles are everlasting. By time, life gives us something which might unfold the greatness of hundreds of Ayahs. Quran is a miraculous book, and its inimitability is continuous and is enriched by time, and when the prophet left it without interpretation, he thereby gave a chance to the scientific development to unfold the greatness of the noble Quran.

Mr. Ayman:

Before reaching the end of this meeting, the topic of inimitability is a topic about the connection between Islam and science, whereas the other party (like the orientalist Sternin) accused Islam of hating science and blocking the path to free intellect.

The solid connection between Quran and science:

Dr. Rateb:

Quran was descended 1400 years ago, from that time till our present day, there were outstanding breakthroughs in science, so did any of it contradict with Quran? Absolutely not!

Imam Ibn Al Qayem, May Allah have mercy on his soul, believed in the inevitable accordance between Akl (reasoning) and Nakl (divine reporting). For me, I believe that the truth is like a circle in which four lines intersect, the first line is the authentic Nakl (divine reporting), the second line is the Akl (reasoning), the third line is the sound human nature, and the fourth line is the objective reality. The truth is what was reported to us through revelation, accepted by straight reasoning not a justified one, a subject of relief by the sound nature not the confused one, and is supported by the objective reality not the false one.

Hence, the accordance between Akl and Nakl is inevitable because Akl (the mind) is a system installed in us by Allah, Nakl is His words, reality is His creation, and the nature is man's frame of reference installed by Allah, therefore the origin is one in all these cases and this exacts accordance between the branches of the same origin.

Mr. Ayman:

Dr. Rateb actually there are lot of questions related to this topic, but we ran out of time, so will you please summarize this issue in concise words, and tell us how can we have a right stance towards this issue as Muslims since we are not scholars?

The stance of the true Muslim towards inimitability:

Dr. Rateb:

Would you believe that any Ayah in Quran might have nothing to do with you, or towards which you shouldn't take a stance ? The answer is absolutely there isn't. Allah's words have purpose, and since we have 1300 Ayahs talking about the universe, so what should we do about them?

Mr. Ayman:

Given all Fiqh science with its tens of thousands of books were based on 150 Ayahs only.

Dr. Rateb:

Why does one sixth of the Quran talk about the universe?

(And by the sun and its brightness; And by the moon as it follows it (the sun);)

[Ash-Shams, 1-2]

(By the dawn; By the ten nights (i.e. the first ten days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah),)

[Al-Fajr, 1-2]

(Say: "Behold all that is in the heavens and the earth,")

[Yunus, 101]

It is a divine order, and every Quranic order is deemed an obligation, unless we have a proof to the otherwise.

Allah's Ayahs are pondering method to mankind.

When Allah orders us the following:

(So let man see from what he is created!)

[At-Tariq, 5]

(Then let man look at his food)

[Abasa, 24]

This is, like many other Ayahs, an open invitation to ponder over Quran, Allah says:

(Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth)

[Aal-'Imran, 190]

There are authenticated Ahadith and many Ayahs close to one sixth of the Quran that should be subjects of cogitation, and I for one see them a pondering method for us.

Translation : Noora Al Sharabi

Edited by : Ghada Homad